SAARC Conference on Child Welfare

1516. **SHRI** V. NARAYANASAMY: Will the Minister of HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

(a) what are the measures suggested by the SAARC conference on South Asian children which recently concluded in Delhi;

(b) what is the number of countries which have participated in the conference and the number which have agreed to the common proposals on child welfare; and

(c) when the next meet is scheduled to be held?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENTS OF YOUTH AFFAIRS AND SPORTS AND WOMEN AND CHILD DEVELOPMENT IN THE MINISTRY OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT (SHRIMATI MARGARET ALVA): (a) to (c) Seven SAARC nations (Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Maldives, Nepal, Pakistan and Sri Lanka) participated in the Ministerial Conference on South Asian Children in Delhi on 27—29 October 1986. The Conference made unanimous recommendations. The main recommendations are listed in the statement attached. (See below). There is no proposal for another meeting.

Statement

RECOMMENDATIONS

A. PRINCIPLES AND PUBLIC POLICIES

1 *Children First*

The principle of CHILDREN FIRST needs to be imbibed by the development process *through enhanced community consciousness, appropriate public policies* and national planning.

2 *Trans-sectoral approach*

Policies and programmes for the development of children have to outgrow the conventional compartmental approach and form an integrated strategy.

3 *Concurrent Services*

The adverse situation of children in the SAARC region is largely caused by ignorance and poverty manifesting themselves in low birth weight, malnutrition, ill-health, growth retardation, slow-learning, low productivity, low earning capacity, and unemployment. Therefore, the response too has to be an interrelated cluster of sustained interventions focused on the mother child like cycle: for example, *viz.* education enhanced status of women, improved social and physical environment, food supplements; income opportunity; social support to saving time and energy; preparation for parenthood; birth spacing; care at birth; maternal care; breastfeeding; proper weaning and supplementary feeding; immunization against childhood diseases; management of diarrhoeal and respiratory illnesses; growth monitoring, and early childhood stimulation. Many of these concerns are easier, better and more durably promoted together than separately.

4 *Community basis*

The basic strategy for organizing services to children has to be rooted in the community. The State needs to recognize and value the community's processes and build on them through a decentralized design of social support services responsive to area specific and people-specific needs with optimal use of local resources.

5 *Voluntary action*

All the countries in the region accord substantial role to voluntary organizations in the context of development of children. It would help the development process if criteria are established for a viable partnership between government and non-government agencies, particularly at the community level.

6 *Planning*

The national planning for economic and social development should aim at meeting the multiple needs of children. This re-

quires a strong political direction for increased investments in children, more efficient application of resources, decentralized delivery mechanisms, use of available low-cost technological and organizational options, including the informal sectors. The response of governments to reduced resources on account of adverse economic factors should take into account its social impact on children, particularly from low income groups, in order to ensure that services for them do not fall below the essential level.

7. Social Communication

A favourable climate for the development of the child should be created by disseminating information related to the survival, development and protection of children, meaningfully, widely and rapidly, Community resources and community organizations in the region should be used more effectively, and strengthened, in both the traditional and modern sectors.

8. Food Security

Member countries should coordinate their food and agricultural policies to ensure access to adequate food for all people in the region.

9. Cooperation for Self-reliance

Member countries should initiate measures towards regional self-reliance in child-related areas like production of essential drugs and vaccines, sharing of technology and experience and collaborative research.

10. Rights of the Child

The SAARC member countries should provide for an early conclusion of the Convention on the Rights of the Child at the UN Human Rights Commission.

11. Collaboration for Peace

Successful action for children can be achieved only in an environment of peace in the region. Member governments should promote mutual understanding, reduce spending on armament and increase investment in child development.

B. Besides, a number of other recommendations were made in the fields of (a) Enriching the Mother-Child Life-Cycle (related to the female child, the adolescent girl, conception to birth, infancy, early childhood, primary school age); (b) Improving the Environment (related to physical environment, social environment).

Malaria and Filaria Eradication Programme

1517. SHRI M. VINCENT: Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the present set up of Malaria and Filaria Eradication programmes and procedures is functioning satisfactorily; and

(b) if not, whether Government propose to set up any other agency for the above purpose?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH IN THE MINISTER OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (KUMARI SAROJ KHAPARDE): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) Does not arise.

Last Hour Rush to Seoul Asiad

1518. SHRI M. VINCENT: Will the Minister of HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether there was a last hour rush to Seoul Asian Games by people who were not sheduled to comprise the group at Government expenses;

(b) what was the total funds spent on the participants and non-participants; and

(c) whether the amount so spent on non-participants is proportional to the amount spent on participants and the number of entry made by the sportsmen?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENTS OF YOUTH AFFAIRS AND SPORTS AND WOMEN AND CHILD DEVELOPMENT IN THE